



# Mishawaka Communicator



*Working together to build the "Best Hometown in America" by delivering exceptional services, promoting safe and clean neighborhoods, elevating the quality of life, and inspiring pride in our community.*

Dave Wood, Mayor

[www.mishawaka.in.gov](http://www.mishawaka.in.gov)

June 2013

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



Like me, you have probably noticed the substandard condition of one of Mishawaka's major corridors. Lincolnway, which passes east/west between the city limits and through the downtown area, is perhaps one of Mishawaka's best-known roads and is certainly its most historic. It could even be considered part of the identity of our community. Though the road is actually a State highway known as Indiana SR 933, I receive a disproportionate amount of complaints regarding the overall condition of the road including, but not limited to inadequate lane markings, poor traffic signals, the ambiguity of not knowing if it is a two- or four-lane road through town, handicapped ramps and sidewalks that flood with water when it rains, and the fact that so much asphalt surface has been added that in some locations that there is virtually no curb between the sidewalk and the street. Most calls concern the potholes or "craters" in the road between Capital and Bittersweet.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is responsible for the road and its maintenance. With the completion of the U.S. 20 Bypass and the soon to be completed Capital Avenue project, Lincolnway could well become an even lower INDOT priority. The road will likely continue to get a minimal amount of maintenance but most certainly will get no major improvements or reconstruction. INDOT has tried many times to give the highway to the City over the years. Mishawaka's position has been that while we favor local control and improvement of the corridor, we could not afford to take the road over and then dump tens of millions of dollars in construction and maintenance it to bring it up to Mishawaka's standards. So the City has refused to consider taking the road over. Now that the State's Capital Avenue project is nearing completion, INDOT again asked that the City consider taking over Lincolnway from Capital Avenue to the eastern City limit.

I believe the time has come to see if the City can reach an agreement to take over the historically significant Lincoln Highway. Rather than rejecting the request outright as we have in the past, this time we carefully considered it. The State has proposed resurfacing the eastern section of Lincolnway from Capital Ave to the eastern City boundary, however in my mind that proposal does not go far enough. I have asked

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## Lowering Your Risk for Disease

*Health Information from Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center*

The American Diabetes Association says that eating healthy is one of the most important things we can do to lower the risk for Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Additionally, research by the National Institutes of Health shows that following a healthier diet can help prevent high blood pressure and may lower blood pressure that is already over the normal range.

- ◆ Keep healthier snacks, such as fruit and vegetables, at home and at work
- ◆ Choose low-fat dairy products
- ◆ Eat whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, brown rice, pasta or oatmeal
- ◆ Select lean meats and poultry
- ◆ Choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds as protein sources

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## UPCOMING EVENTS!



**June 21-22, 2013**

**Merrifield Park  
Crawford Park**

## Summer Concert Series 2013

### Battell Park Bandshell

Mondays 7:00-8:00pm

June 3	Da Bears
June 10	Michiana Concert Band
June 17	Everyday People
June 24	Valleyaires
July 1	High Life
July 8	Michiana Concert Band
July 15	Ron Wiggins Quartet

### Beutter Park

Thursdays 6:30-8:30pm

June 6	Johnny Dawson
June 13	Van Dyke Review
June 20	No Concert
June 27	Soul Funkshun
July 4	Alligator Blackbird (Fireworks afterward)
July 11	Everyday People
July 18	Terry and the Heartbeats

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood (continued)

our City Engineer, City Planner and Street Commissioner to consider the necessary improvements to bring the corridor up to City standards.

Currently, we believe that Lincolnway requires complete reconstruction, including full-face curbs, full-depth pavement, handicapped ramps, sidewalk replacement/installation, and signal upgrades. In areas where it's connected to combined sewers, we believe that there is a requirement to provide storm water separation. In the older areas, Lincolnway will also require widening and/or narrowing based on needed lane reconfigurations. We believe the cost of improvements for the entire Lincolnway corridor (from one end of the City to the other) will be in the ***tens of millions of dollars***. So why even consider taking the relinquishment? ***I firmly believe that Lincolnway will be maintained to a higher, more appropriate standard if it is under City control.***

As a result, I drafted a response letter to INDOT indicating that the City of Mishawaka is willing to accept what we believe is a long-term liability for the relinquishment of Lincolnway, but that we are not willing to take over a corridor that isn't brought up to current City standards. As an incentive, I also indicated that if INDOT wanted to be creative and collaborative, the City would be willing to bring up to 10% of funding to the table. We are only willing to do this for a comprehensive improvement. Specifically, we could justify the expenditure of funds if we can combine INDOT's improvements with planned historic downtown improvements or storm water separation that can be incorporated into our wastewater Long Term Control Plan (LTCP).

Ultimately, I see value in controlling the corridor that is designed to be woven into the fabric of our City. Having the road in local control would give the City options to improve traffic safety, improve the appearance and character of the road. Most importantly, I believe that the controlling the road could help us to stimulate economic development and promote redevelopment along the important road. Governor Pence has repeatedly stated that "ROADS = JOBS". I wholeheartedly believe, though I often carry it further by saying that "Infrastructure = Jobs". One of the most important elements to attracting jobs is building the infrastructure and road network to serve them. Roads = Jobs is not just for new areas or along interstate highways, but for older established areas and downtown as well, particularly when the substandard conditions of the road are likely viewed negatively by most traveling it.

Unfortunately, even though we have a good working relationship with our local INDOT District office in LaPorte, we have had a predominantly one-way relationship with their bosses, the decision-makers at INDOT in Indianapolis, relative to the design, construction and maintenance of projects in the City, particularly Capital Avenue. It is my opinion that INDOT has been lacking in matters of communication and, in general, just not working with us on how State highways are best used on a local level and woven into the fabric of the City. This is not a new development as we have had similar issues going back over decades. I am the eternal optimist and I believe that tomorrow will always be better. I took care to copy the INDOT Commissioner, our capable local State Legislators, and Governor Pence's office with the City's position in hopes of building better lines of communication.

At this point, we have not heard any official State response. It is my hope that the City can forge an improved partnership with INDOT to move the long-term improvement of the Lincolnway corridor forward. I think it is in the best interest of all involved that we do so. I will keep you posted.

*Mayor Dave Wood*



## Lowering Your Risk for Disease (continued)

Another great way to reduce your risk of developing disease is by maintaining spiritual wellness. According to Mental Health America, there is a connection between spirituality and health. Spirituality can reduce the stress that often drives disease.

- ♦ *Discover and rediscover what makes your life meaningful.* Find what brings your life purpose and align your choices with it. Wherever your passion is, there you'll find your purpose.
- ♦ *Nurture your connection* with your Higher Power through regular spiritual practices. Some people choose prayer, others meditate, some read Scripture and others walk through nature.
- ♦ *Connect with others who share your values.* Having meaningful relationships with others, which focus on what is important to us, reminds us that we are not alone and can often bring joy to our lives.
- ♦ *Find opportunities to serve.* Helping others in need, either through volunteer work or some other means, nurtures our spirit when we feel our actions make a positive difference for other people.

Last, but not least, getting annual physicals and tests from your doctor is key in sustaining your health and preventing diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure.